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Saudi Arabia

Poultry and Products

Saudi Arabia Lifts Imports Ban Placed on French Poultry Meat 2002

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Report Highlights:

On September 17, 2002, the Saudi Ministry of Commerce (MOC) informed the French Embassy in Riyadh that it had lifted the immediate temporary import ban imposed on July 25, 2002 on French poultry and poultry products because of reported contamination by synthetic hormones harmful to humans.

Includes PSD changes: No

Includes Trade Matrix: No

Unscheduled Report

Riyadh [SA2], SA

On September 17, 2002, the Saudi Ministry of Commerce (MOC) informed the French Embassy in Riyadh that it had lifted the immediate temporary import ban imposed on July 25, 2002 on French poultry and poultry products because of reported contamination by synthetic hormones harmful to humans. According to our contacts at the MOC, the Ministerial letter sent to the French Embassy in Riyadh stipulated the conditions that must be met by French exporters. The major conditions are listed below:

1. Hormone Free Certificate: MOC requires that the responsible French government agency issues a health certificate with each poultry meat shipment confirming that the poultry meat was tested and found totally free from any kind of hormones. According to trade contacts, a couple of shipments of French frozen chicken meat have arrived at Saudi ports a few days ago.

2. Chicken Meet Quality Standards: Imported poultry meat & products must meet all existing Saudi Arabian poultry meat quality standards and specifications including the Halal Slaughtering requirements.

3. Bans on Animal Ruminants in Poultry Feeding: The MOC stressed that the health certificates of all imported poultry and poultry products conform to the Ministerial decree number 123 issued in January 2001. The decree requires that health certificate issued by government agency of exporting country clearly indicate that the birds slaughtered had not been fed animal protein, animal fats, or animal by-products. The MOC, which implemented the requirement on March 25, 2001, says that the measure is necessary to prevent the entry of poultry meat considered unfit for human consumption due to feeding of animal ruminants.

4. Laboratory Test: All poultry meat and products imported will be tested at Saudi ports of entry to ascertain that they meet the above requirements.

Recent Saudi Arabian Poultry Import Data:

In 2001 Saudi Arabia imported 400,000 metric tons of poultry meat and products, up by 15 percent compared to the 2000 import level. With more than 60 percent market share in recent years, Brazil has remained the leading supplier of frozen broilers to the Kingdom, followed by France and China (for deboned chicken). The United States has been a distant 4th.

Brazilian poultry exports to the Kingdom in 2001 reached 255,989 metric tons (mt), an increase of 23 percent vs. 2000 while imports from France decreased from 113,327 mt in 2000 to 107,175 mt in 2001. In recent years, French exports have been declining significantly due mainly lack of price competitiveness despite the continued export subsidies French exports receive.

Poultry meat imports from China mostly deboned chicken increased from 18,475 mt in 2000 to 33,534 mt in 2001, an increase of about 82 percent resulted from the continued price competitiveness for deboned chicken compared to other suppliers. Chinese deboned chicken meat is used for Shawarmas, a Middle Eastern style popular sandwich which contains boneless chicken meat or beef mixed with pickles, lettuce and mayonnaise wrapped in pita bread. Shawarmas are now available in many U.S. cities with significant Middle Eastern populations. Poultry meat imports from the States in 2001 decreased by 70 percent compared to the 2000 level

(2,109 mt in 2001 vs. 6,952 mt in 2000). The main factor for the huge decline in U.S. exports is the inability of American exporters to offer competitive priced poultry meat derived from poultry fed on a 100 percent vegetable protein diet.

End of Report